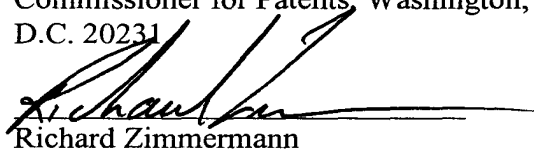


PATENT APPLICATION

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT  
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PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT


Commissioner for Patents  
Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

This is a preliminary amendment to the above-identified application which is a continuation-in-part application of U.S. Serial No. 09/407,667. Please enter the following amendments.

In the Specification:

At page 1, before the first sentence, add the following sentence: --This

 application claims priority on PCT/EP01/03481 filed March 27, 2001 and PCT/IB00/00849 filed June 26, 2000 and is a continuation-in-part application of U.S. Patent Application Serial No.